



# Mc Dougall's Good Stories for Children



## A TALE of How the Moon Men Were Foiled in Their Effort to Kidnap a Group of Boys, by One Who Was Imposed on by Others

THIS is the story of how a poor, weak, sickly boy became the owner of the finest museum in all the world, after being a giant himself.

Douglas Hawtrej Godard was the name of this boy, who was feeble and timid and unable to join in the rough play of the other boys, so most of his time was spent in study. He knew many languages, and there was not a word that he couldn't spell or a place in the geography he couldn't describe. But what he wanted most—to play with other boys—was denied him because they refused to play with so small and weak a lad. They drove him away with sharp, cutting words, and told him to go and play with girls or learn to do knitting, called him "bow-legs" and "scare-cat" and refused to let him even stand around when they played.

One fine day in May, Oscar Lipton, Amos Holbrook, Frank Delano, Raymond Foster and Herman Wirz were spinning tops in a vacant lot, when Douglas came limping along and stopped to look at them.

"Get along out o' here!" cried Frank Delano, a big, brawny boy with a large Adam's apple. "Go play over at the kindergarten!"

"Yes!" shouted Amos Holbrook, who already had shaved once and had a pair of fists like a blacksmith's. "Chase yourself! We don't want no spindly-shanked kids around here!"

"That's right!" added Herman Wirz, who could lift fifty-six pounds with one finger. "Sneak! Swim out, or you'll get hurt in the push. This ain't no place for kids, anyhow!"

They looked so fierce that Douglas was alarmed and withdrew a few yards; but the other boys, resenting even his presence in the lot, moved off in a body, casting back at him sour and fierce glances. Douglas, however, in spite of many rude remarks, followed them at a distance, resolved to see what they were about to do, as small boys often do, you know, and even when they went as far as the river, where he had never been before, he still clung to them.

"Say!" cried Raymond Foster, "haven't you any sense at all? Can't you see we don't want you tagging along? Now, just mosey out quick, or you'll get a swift poke on the nose that'll give you the heartburn. See!"

Douglas was about to retreat, when suddenly Oscar cried:

"Here's a funny red berry! I wonder if it's pizen?"

### HE ATE SOME STRANGE BERRIES

All the boys gathered around a small bush bearing pale pink berries, but as they had never seen any before like them they asked Douglas what they were, because they knew he had studied everything. He could not tell the name of the berry, and so, angered at having asked him, they compelled the poor weak child to eat all of the berries at once, thinking to make him sick, although they knew they might be poisonous, but the hard-hearted lads did not care for that.

Now, these were mammoth berries, which blossom and ripen on but one day in the year, the 9th of May, and they disappear in an hour, so very few people except wizards, witches and botanists ever find them at all. They have the marvelous power of making one who eats them grow suddenly and unexpectedly, at any moment, to an enormous size. Therefore they are called mammoth berries. It was fortunate, although so dangerous, that the boys made Douglas eat them all, as you will see. Any one of the lads would willingly have eaten them had he known their magic powers; but as it was, the weakest and smallest got them. After he had swallowed every one the boys drove him away with jeers and gibes. They were standing in threatening attitudes facing him as they ordered him to go, and none of them saw a very remarkable object in the air. It was a thing shaped like an immense cigar, that was moving slowly along over the water toward them—a sort of an airship, but unlike any ever seen before. It was filled with queer, dwarfish, hairy men, with large, misshapen heads that looked more like those of fish than human heads, and all of them were glaring eagerly at the group of boys on the shore.

The airship came nearer and nearer swiftly and silently, and then suddenly darted down upon them. As the startled boys turned to see what was coming the fishlike men poured out of the car and grabbed them, each lad being seized by several fish-men at once, and so powerful were the fish-men that even the burly Amos was perfectly helpless in their grasp.

Like so many bags the boys were tossed into the car, the fish-men sprang in after them, and up shot the airship. Douglas, although the smallest, was the first to recover his senses, and he looked at the fish-men carefully.

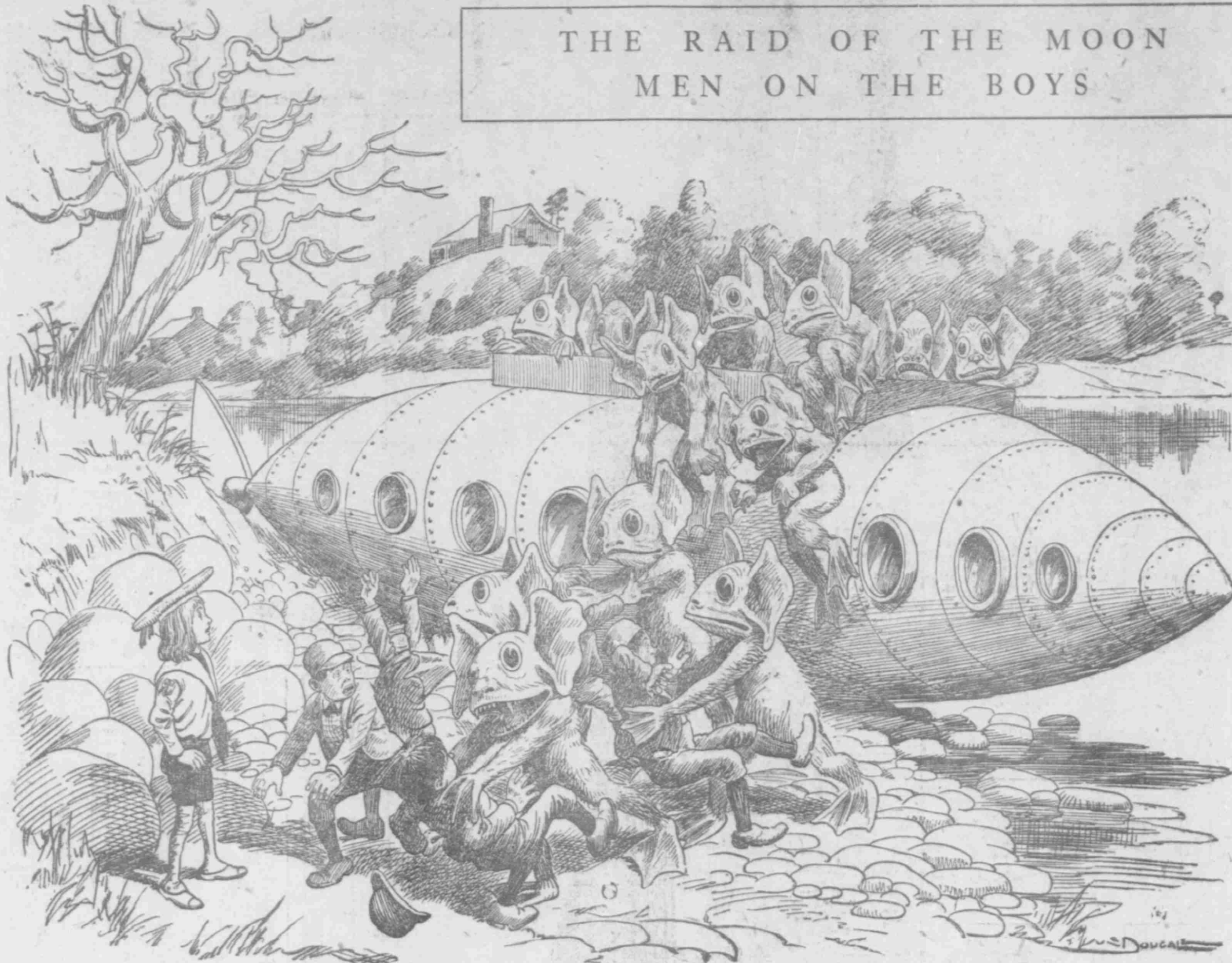
### THE MEN FROM THE MOON

He soon saw that they were not real men, or rather not men of this world, for no such human beings have ever been seen on earth. With crooked, short legs, long, thick arms, covered with red hair; no fingernails nor teeth, yet very fierce and savage, their heads, with their enormous red eyes, made them seem terrible indeed. They talked together in a strange language, and it was easy to see that they were conversing about their captives, for now and then they turned their awful red eyes upon the boys, all of whom were in the utmost terror.

The airship shot upward so swiftly that it was as invisible as a bullet fired from a gun, and thus in an hour or so Douglas saw they were approaching the moon. Then he knew where the men had come from. They were moon men, and in their airship had swooped down upon the earth after victims. He imagined that he now could guess where all the people go who so mysteriously disappear every day from their homes. They are caught by moon men, are carried to the moon and never return. He never expected to see his home again, and he wondered whether the moon men eat their captives or make slaves of them.

But he did not learn this then, for just about that time he suddenly began to grow bigger and bigger, so that in a few minutes he half-filled the great car and threw the moon men into extreme alarm, for such a spectacle they nor anyone else had ever seen. The idea of a man suddenly becoming a giant before one's eyes scared the boys, too, almost out of their senses, but Douglas remembered that he had once read about "diminishing berries" in one of my own stories, and he rightly guessed that the berries he

## THE RAID OF THE MOON MEN ON THE BOYS



had eaten must have the very opposite effect.

He whispered this to Amos Holbrook, and as he had perhaps more sense than the others he, too, concluded that it was the right solution. Douglas grew larger and larger until all the rest were crowded to the sides of the car, and then, seeing that all the moon men were paralyzed with fear, he picked up their captain by the back of the neck and commanded him to turn the car back to the earth. To his surprise, the moon man understood him, having probably learned English from some former captive, and he reversed the direction of the airship at once, for, without thinking, Douglas had held him over the side.

"Chuck 'em all overboard!" said Oscar. "Let's see if they'll break into pieces before they reach the earth!"

"Yes!" cried Frank. "Fire one at that cloud below there, and see him puncture it. I'll bet you can't hit it the first time!"

"No," said Douglas. "I will save them, for I think I can use them when we get back. I'll bet they have captured lots of people, and I'll make them tell what they've done with them."

"When we get back we will torture them," said Raymond. "Then they'll confess."

"Yes!" cried Douglas. "You'll do a lot! I'd like to leave you alone with one of them and see what you'd do. I guess you'd holler for me to come and help you pretty quick! You talk big now. It's a wonder I don't get back at you all, now that I've got a chance, for abusing me and calling me names!"

He looked so terrible as he said this, and so awfully enormous that all the boys felt a chill of fear go through them, for, after all, they felt that they deserved punishment indeed for their cruelty. Now they had to depend upon the once frail and weak lad whom they had called "spindle-shanks" for their very lives, as, if he left them for an instant, the moon men would have attacked them promptly. So they ceased to make suggestions to Douglas, for they did not know that he was only joking.

He turned to the leader of the moon men and told him that he must at once instruct him in the art of managing the airship, and the captain, of course, instantly showed him how it was done.

The ship was moved through the air by means of an apparatus that shut off, or turned on in an instant the power of gravitation, which, you know, is what makes things fall to the ground, and the absence of which would allow everything to fly off into the air like so many rockets. The machine controlled this mysterious force, about which no one on earth knows the least thing, and the airship moved, by means of a tiny button, anywhere the man behind the button wished to go.

Douglas learned all about it in twenty minutes because he was very smart and learned in all sorts of things, from electricity to vermiform appendices, so he told the captain to go away back and sit down while he ran the ship. Then he steered her in all directions, although he found it rather hard to press the button, as his finger was awfully large. He covered not only the button, but the large dial that showed the course of the airship. Still, he found that he could manage the ship easily, and then he turned her earthward again, and in another hour they were hovering over the world. They could see all the oceans and continents, all the capes, isthmuses and peninsulas just as plainly as if it were a colored map spread below them, and it was a wonderful lesson in geography.

But just where they were pointing was a land that he had never read much about, because people from outside are never allowed to enter it. This was the land of Thibet, and, although filled with great mountains, it was adorned with marvelous cities built of pearl, ivory and silver.

This particular part of Thibet is called Biff, and is a land that no stranger has ever even heard of, still less thought of visiting. It is away behind the times, of course. The people of Biff have never heard of photographs, telephones, automobiles, carpet sweepers, canned goods or bicycles, so you may imagine what an excitement was created by the sight of an airship.

They shouted in alarm. Some fled to the cellars, others into caves or crawled under beds or covered themselves with rugs, hoping to escape the eye of the monster.

The ruler of Biff, who is called the Great Gazaab, soon heard the outcry, and hurried from his ivory palace to see what was happening in his usually se-

rene and happy dominions, but when he saw the ship just a few blocks away and coming directly toward his palace, he, too, was thrown into a panic and tried to flee, but, being old and very rheumatic, he could not walk fast, and when he got back to his door he found that his servants had closed it in fright, and he was left trembling outside, with this terrible thing coming nearer every moment.

But as he stood transfixed with fear he looked up and saw the boys staring down at the city, with its beautiful gardens and houses of ivory, pearl and silver. He recognized them as mortals, or at least resembling human beings, and concluded that they were angels, so he resolved to put on a brave front, as became a Gazaab of Biff, and, standing up, he made a most profound bow. Douglas called out:

"Good morning, sir! What is this place?"

"This," replied the Gazaab, "is Biff, a town of Thibet, as you are doubtless aware, and are only gazing at me."

"Far be it from me," replied Douglas, "to gape so reverend and noble appearing an old gentleman as you. Are you used to having airships here?"

"Is that an airship?" cried the Gazaab in astonishment. "I've read about them, but I thought they looked like balloons!"

"Not this kind," replied Douglas. "This one was made in the moon, and I've a load of the most comical-looking moon inhabitants in here that you ever saw. I'll show you one."

He reached down, picked up the captain and held him out for the ruler of Biff to examine. The Gazaab was even more amazed at the sight of the moon man than he had been at the ship or the giant Douglas.

Then he dropped the airship gently into the Gazaab's back garden, where the people couldn't come rubbing around and fool with its machinery when they got over their alarm, and all of the boys jumped out, but Douglas tied every one of the moon men with cords, so that they could move neither hand nor foot.

They set up the most peculiar cries, something like young puppies, for they imagined that they were to be eaten at once, as they always bind their victims before roasting them. The Gazaab asked all of his visitors to enter his palace, where he

## A CURIOUS Voyage in an Airship, the Rapid Growth of a Giant, a Visit to a Strange Country and a Battle With a Wild Beast

clapped his hands, and instantly ebony-hued slaves came with sherbet, lemonade, sweetmeats and fruits and placed them before the boys, who were pretty hungry now, having been five or six hours without food of any sort.

Of course Douglas could not enter the palace, being eleven feet high already, so his lunch was eaten outside, but now and then he looked in upon the boys to see how they were behaving.

Soon the Gazaab came out, for he found that none of the other boys could speak Thibetan, and he began to ask all manner of questions of Douglas, who had learned the language a few years before, when he thought of being a missionary. He had to tell the ruler all about the new things that had been invented since he had last seen any newspapers—many years ago—and all the afternoon was thus passed. It was nearly night when the Gazaab said:

"Now I am real glad you came, because with all these new things that you know about it's possible that you can rid our lovely land of an awful pest and dreadful nuisance."

"What is that?" asked Douglas.

"It's the Glossary," replied the Gazaab. "That's an animal. It dwells in the Trans-Ultra Mountains and feeds mostly on my poor, defenseless subjects, capturing them while at work in the fields and forests. I suppose I've lost several hundred of pretty valuable men and women since the Glossary came here three years ago. Now it's got to coming into town and catching my best taxpayers, and even my officials, now and then."

"How and where can I find this Glossary?" asked Douglas, "and how big is the beast? This giant business is new to me, you see."

"You won't have to go far, I imagine," replied the Gazaab. "It's always prowling around the vineyards and gardens nowadays. Only yesterday it got a cobbler right on Grand avenue, near the band stand. You'll see it soon enough, but, after all, I do not suppose a giant of your size thinks twice about tackling a Glossary, as it's only as big as a large elephant. Yet it has terrible claws—"

"Well, I'll take a peek at it, anyhow," said Douglas, "and if it's not too big I'll try conclusions with it. I guess I can run faster than it, after all, if I have to."

"Oh, it can't run very fast. But, holy Mohamet! how it can overleapingly jump!" exclaimed the Gazaab. "About thirty feet, I think!"

### DEATH OF THE GLOSSARY

"I'll bet I can cover fifty," replied Douglas, proudly. This was quite likely, as by this time he was twenty-seven feet in height and broad in proportion.

He called to the boys, and when they came out he told them that he was about to hunt the Glossary, describing the animal. But somehow they were not anxious to accompany him until he assured them of their own safety, when they said that they would go, but that they would keep in the rear—just like boys who annoy and ill-treat weaker lads.

Everybody prepared for a grand banquet on Douglas' return, for they all were quite certain that he would destroy the Glossary with almost no trouble. The Gazaab even went so far as to send a messenger to the Grand Lama, who rules all Thibet, that the animal was as good as dead already, and that he would probably be able to send him its head to ornament the royal palace next day.

It was well toward evening when Douglas started out, and he did not expect to see the animal at all; but before he had reached the low, vine-crowned hills outside of the city the boys, who followed at a safe distance, saw something rush out in a cloud of reddish dust, which instantly hid everything from view.

It was the fierce, infuriated Glossary, but the animal had made a mistake. Peering out from his hiding place in the low shrubbery, where he was waiting for some passer-by, he saw Douglas, who had already discovered him, and was bending down to creep up and spring upon the Glossary suddenly. The animal thought it was merely a rather larger-sized man than usual, but when the giant's great hands clutched it by the throat it felt that something remarkable was about to happen.

Douglas seized it by the neck, which was very long and thin, and when it tried to scratch him with its great claws he grasped them both at once with the other hand and, in spite of its vigorous squirming and twisting, he held it until at last, with eyes popping out, it ceased to writhe, and finally drooped limp and lifeless to the ground, choked to death by his giant grip.

Great was the rejoicing when it was known that Douglas had already slain the terrible creature and people came by hundreds, and then by thousands, bringing all manner of beautiful presents of pearls, rubies, ivory carvings, precious vases, rugs, shawls, gold and silver statuettes—in fact, everything that one could imagine that was rare and costly, for they were filled with gratitude.

### FOUNDED A GREAT MUSEUM

The skin of the Glossary was immediately sent to the Amerer, and he sent Douglas a beautiful pipe, made of a single pearl as large as my fist. There was a great feast, at which Douglas made a speech in Thibetan and promised to return and bring some wonderful things from America, and then, along toward morning, they bundled the moon men into the airship and, putting in all the rare gifts, Douglas pushed the button, and away they went.

By 2 o'clock they reached home and found the whole town out, while men were dragging the river, thinking they had all been drowned. When the people saw the moon men and heard the story they went wild with wonder, and newspaper reporters kept them busy, I can tell you, for several hours relating over and over the account of the combat and the capture of the moon men.

So that is how Douglas started a museum. He had to. People pestered him so constantly, coming from all over the world to see his strange captives, that he simply had to place these occupants of another planet on exhibition, and he charged a little money for admission, in order to send his seven brothers to college. I don't blame him a bit, although I could have made more money taking kings, queens and other crowned heads on little excursions here and there at big prices in that remarkable airship.

If Douglas prefers a museum, I do not criticize his taste at all, so there's an end to it.  
WALT MCDUGALL

## DOUGLAS CONQUERS THE AWFUL GLOSSARY

